



National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Report

Duxford Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

St John's Street
Duxford
Cambridge
Cambridgeshire
CB2 4RA

Diocese: Ely

Local authority: Cambridgeshire
Dates of inspection: 25th November, 2011
Date of last inspection: 4th October, 2007
School's unique reference number: 110798
Headteacher: Mrs Ann Gardner
Inspector's name and number: Mrs D Lenton/460

School context

Duxford Church of England Community Primary School has 197 children on roll. The school is in an attractive setting and serves the village of Duxford itself and the nearby villages of Hinxton and Ickleton. Nearly all children are from a white British background; there are two Hindu and one Buddhist family. The nearby parish church of St John's, although redundant, is still consecrated and used by the school for religious education and a quiet space.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Duxford Church of England Community Primary School as a Church of England school are good.

The warmth and confidence of the school as a distinctively church school is apparent on entering. The school's effective Christian values are seen in the excellent relationships between adults and children. There is an expectation of kindness, forgiveness and respect between all those who are part of the school community. Children are bright and enthusiastic, displaying a genuine interest in all that their school is and does.

Established strengths

- The school's outstanding quality of care for all, alongside its total commitment to being inclusive
- The excellent relationship with the local church community
- The quality of the children's independence and ability to reflect

Focus for development

- Staff to review Positive Behaviour policy in light of the current wording in the SIAS School Self-Review.
- To celebrate the school's Church of England status on the website
- Governors to refocus on their specific areas for monitoring

The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is outstanding at meeting the needs of all learners

The impact of the Christian values of hope and love are very evident within this school. This is a highly supportive school, where all children are made to feel secure and accepted. There is an expectation that older pupils will support the younger ones. This is demonstrated through the very effective use of the "buddy" system. Both parents and children testified to the significance that this has for the school. Children have high self-esteem. Their

achievements are celebrated through the use of special cards and team points. These are highly prized and are acknowledged in the Monday morning assembly. One governor explained: "We care for the whole well-being of the child – we are not interested solely in academic results."

The school's carefully chosen charities uphold and testify the value that the school places on the Christian values of service to and compassion for others. These include helping the local night shelter. The leadership skills of the children are seen in the way in which they organise activities for others through the Blue Peter appeals. The school environment is highly conducive to spiritual development. The children explained that sometimes they just sit on the friendship bench to take some time to think before going back to join their friends. One teacher said: "They are thoughtful and reflective children, who are not afraid to express how they feel." Teachers have a very effective method of noting and recording children's significant comments regarding spiritual insights, particularly in religious education. These are then used to report to parents at the end of the year as evidence to support statements of attainment.

The impact of collective worship on the school community is good

Collective worship is of central importance to the school. The arrangements for celebrating worship have been carefully thought out and planned to have maximum impact. There is some evidence of formal assessment and monitoring from foundation governors, but children's comments were particularly telling. One girl described it as a "joyful" time. On the day of the inspection the children were still and reverent, and there was a tangible sense of God's presence.

There are examples of families from other faith backgrounds, as well as those of no faith, who are made to feel welcome and are happy to attend. A variety of leaders allow children an excellent experience of different types of worship.

The strong and sensitive leadership of the local incumbent creates a depth in the children's spiritual awareness. One parent said that her child often talked about faith and belief at home, in response to collective worship. The school celebrates the church's year through the different festivals, such as Harvest, Easter and Christmas. To foster the strong sense of community that lies at the heart of the school, these festivals often take place at separate times in the three parish churches in the benefice. The children use the Lord's prayer with understanding. They also spoke about the importance of their personal prayers. The connection with the local church community is highly effective. For example, each year an exciting Church Day takes place. Many volunteers from the community descend on the school for the day and involve the children in readings, plays and other activities around a Christian theme.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is good

There is a strong and cohesive Christian vision for Duxford school. Signage and displays clearly state that this is a school based on Christian values. Parents and all who visit the school are not left in any doubt about its church status. However it was disappointing not to see this celebrated on the school website. Because the school is reflective and honest in its judgements, this is something of which they are aware.

Although all policies are rooted in Christian values, these were not always explicitly expressed. There is however an effective partnership between the senior leadership team and the governors. All areas for development from the previous inspection have been addressed – some more fully than others. The system for evaluation of worship is in its early stages, for example. The foundation governors are outstanding at promoting the school as a church school. This is achieved through the Church Day, through prayer and regular reports to the Parochial Church Council. Also within the recruitment process the governors are clear in expressing the church status of the school to prospective candidates.

The incumbent acts as a strong and constant link between the school and the church. She explained that the strength of the church school lay in the ability to share her faith with the children rather than simply describing it.

All the staff are excellent role models. Parents and children expressed confidence in being able to speak to them if they had any concerns at any time.

The Friends of the school play a significant part in the life of the school and feel that their views are taken seriously.